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MAGAZINE

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Congratulations to the following members who have been named to the Executive Committee of the 2017-18 USTA Northern Board of Directors. All begin their two-year term on January 1, 2017.

Liz Hamburg of Rapid City, S.D., is the new President of the Section and in her 10th year as a member of the Board of Directors. She started playing tennis at age 35 and now plays 4.0 USTA Leagues. She has been Secretary and First Vice President of the USTA Northern Board of Directors, Chair of the Junior Tennis Council and Compensation Committee and former member of the USTA Northern Audit and Awards Committees. Hamburg currently serves on the USTA National Local Play and Competition Committee. She is a former member of the Arrowhead Country Club Board of Directors, chairing the Tennis Committee, and was the President of the Black Hills Tennis Association, now serving on its Board of Directors. She also is the Executive Director of the Black Hills Area Community Foundation.

Kathleen Lundberg of Minneapolis, Minn., moves from President to Section Delegate. Lundberg has been a member of USTA for over 20 years and is in her sixth term on the USTA Northern Board. She has supported a variety of events such as the Boston Scientific Pro Women's Tennis Classic and the Aquatennial Plaza Tennis Classic for a number of years. She also has been very active in the Corporate Tennis Challenge, WorldTeam Tennis and has played on USTA summer and winter teams. Lundberg also served as a volunteer with Urban Tennis (now InnerCity Tennis). Now a consultant, Lundberg had been with the Guidant Corporation and Boston Scientific for over 20 years as the Senior Vice President and Chief Compliance Officer.

Scott Boyer, of Rochester, Minn., is in his initial year as First Vice President of the Executive Committee. A former Director of Player Development for USTA Northern from 1997-98, Boyer is serving his second stint on the Board of Directors (previously serving from 2000-04) and has been on the Junior Tennis Council since 1998. He is the new head coach of Team Northern after serving as a Regional and Sectional Training Center Coach. He also is the leader of the USTA Northern Boys 18s Team Tennis squad, which received the Sportsmanship Award at Nationals in 2016. He is a member of the USTA National Junior Tennis Council and Sportsmanship Committee and was part of the USTA Professional Players Rules Committee from 2002-04.

From Valley City, N.D., **Susan Kringlie** moves from Secretary to Vice President on the Executive Committee. Kringlie is entering her fourth term on the Board of Directors. She has been a tennis player since elementary school and won the North Dakota State Doubles Championship in 1991. She was a founding member of the Valley City Community Tennis Association and the North Dakota Tennis Association and helped establish the North Dakota Tennis Hall of Fame. She is also a Valley City Park Board Commissioner. Kringlie's family was just named the 2016 USTA Northern Family of the Year.

Matt Boughton of Eau Claire, Wis., moves onto the Executive Committee as Secretary after two terms as an At-Large Board Member. Boughton was the leader of the SafeSport Task Force which recently released the USTA Northern SafeSport Handbook and Reporting Procedure. A Professional 1 Certified USPTA Teaching Professional with over 15 years of experience, he was named the 2011 Wisconsin Tennis Pro of the Year and was the recipient of the USPTA Industry Excellence Award in 2012.

Dellwood, Minn., resident **Julie Whitaker** joins the Executive Committee as the new Treasurer after working for Wells Fargo/Norwest Banks as a Vice President from 1981-96. A long-time USTA League player and captain, Whitaker has led many teams to Section and National Championships. She also had a daughter who played junior tournaments before joining the USTA Northern Board as an At-Large Member in 2014.

Eleven additional people have been selected to serve as At-Large Members for 2017-18 including **Susan Allen** (Shakopee, Minn.), **Pam Boorsma** (Minneapolis, Minn.), **Jessie Daw** (Sioux Falls, S.D.), **David Fishbaine** (Minnetonka, Minn.), **Justin Gaard** (Minnetonka, Minn.), **Andrew Holm** (St. Paul, Minn.), **Christine Horton** (Prior Lake, Minn.), **Brian McCoy** (Shoreview, Minn.), **Aftabur "Dipu" Rahman** (St. Paul, Minn.) and **Lars Ranger** (Edina, Minn.).



2017-18 USTA Northern Board of Directors: Front Row (L to R): Matt Boughton, Julie Whitaker, Scott Boyer, Liz Hamburg, Kathy Lundberg, Susan Kringlie. Back Row (L to R): Justin Gaard, Christine Horton, Jessie Daw, David Fishbaine, Lars Ranger, Andrew Holm, Dipu Rahman, Susan Allen, Brian McCoy. Not Pictured: Pam Boorsma.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



When my term as President of the USTA Northern Board of Directors began two years ago, I inherited some great things. The prior president, **Roshan Rajkumar**, had initiated a Strategic Priorities Task Force which identified four areas to guide the Section's focus: Adult/Senior Opportunities; Youth/Junior Opportunities; Community Tennis and People.

In the transition, my goal was not to reinvent our priorities, but to build on the work started by Roshan and the Task Force. I also had the benefit of a great Board of Directors representing all areas of Minnesota, North and South Dakota and Northeastern Wisconsin. Over 80 percent of the Board was returning members, while the four new members brought unique skills to our leadership team.

With this talented group of volunteers, and the dedication and creativity of the USTA Northern staff, we accomplished many great things in response to the priorities set forth by the Task Force including:

1. USTA League Tennis grew 3.4% overall and 4.8% in the Twin Cities
 - ▶ USTA League players represent the biggest number of tennis enthusiasts in USTA Northern with over 11,400 USTA League registrations each year and 3,800 unique players. That means each unique player participates in an average of three leagues each.
 - ▶ Through the USTA Northern Matchline service, staff placed 762 players on league teams in 2016 – an astounding 97% placement rate.
 - ▶ ONE Doubles has really taken off in 2016 giving people additional play opportunities in the spring and fall. Over 70 teams will participate in the Section Championships in December.
2. Overall tennis participation shows a 4% increase over the past three years. That does not sound like much, but when almost every other traditional sport has declined, it is a huge win for tennis. The number of players per capita in our Section is 6.5% which is the third-highest mark of all the Sections in the United States. Pretty amazing with snow on the ground for half of the year! It shows that we are making an impact in growing the game within Northern.
3. USTA Northern introduced a new initiative in 2015 called Tennis In YOUR Park, offering new beginning tennis opportunities for adults and seniors in their local parks. This year, the program grew more than 25 percent.
4. With a matching grant from Youthprise, the Urban Youth Tennis & Education Fund supported the following new initiatives in 2016:
 - ▶ Fort First Fridays – A series of play events for urban high school tennis players on the first Friday of every month.
 - ▶ Series of Level 8 tournaments – Free match-play opportunities for under-resourced youth introducing them to competition.



- ▶ St. Paul Pathway manager – This position is a shared position between Fred Wells Tennis & Education Center and St. Paul Urban Tennis which ensures the youth in St. Paul understand how to navigate opportunities being offered in the area.
 - ▶ Shared bus contracts – Transporting players on Saturdays to tennis and leadership opportunities in Minneapolis and St. Paul.
5. The SafeSport Handbook was completed thanks to a task force headed by Northern Board Member **Matt Boughton** and the rest of the Board. It has been published and put into practice, while SafeSport training for providers, staff, board, volunteers and others is underway.
 6. We have had a number of BIG tennis events in the Northern Section including:
 - ▶ Men's 65s Category I National Championships in Eden Prairie, Minn.

- ▶ National Public Parks in Sioux Falls, S.D.
 - ▶ National Senior Games at Baseline Tennis Center in Minneapolis
 - ▶ US Open Northern Section Qualifier at Baseline Tennis Center
 - ▶ Champions Series Tour stop featuring **James Blake, Andy Roddick, Michael Chang and John McEnroe**
 - ▶ The Aquatennial Tennis Classic
 - ▶ A Guinness World Record for Most Consecutive Matches Played
7. We've supported more than 50 outreach events across the Section introducing tennis to new and diverse groups.
 8. Just in our Section, staff has trained over 500 school teachers, coaches and tennis instructors, which is key in continuing to reach new players and growing the game.
 9. We have formed a new high-performance tennis path – TEAM NORTHERN. The team and coaches have been selected and the first camp is scheduled for February.
 10. And we couldn't have done it without expanding our social media presence – Facebook, Twitter, Instagram – with thousands of likes and followers added.

This is quite a list of accomplishments and all of us should be very proud, but why does it matter you might be asking? For every adult playing tennis, I am sure they improve their health and longevity through the physical, mental and social benefits of tennis. For every child or junior introduced to tennis, we have seen some amazing statistics on the improvements in school performance, career aspirations and overall health and wellness.

For those of us who volunteer on the Board of Directors, this is what it is all about - giving back to a sport that has brought many good things to our lives. Thank you to a great Board, a wonderful extended group of committee volunteers and the best staff ever. GO NORTHERN!

Kathy Lundberg
USTA Northern President



CONGRATULATIONS

2016 Award Winners



Front Row (L to R): Kelley Okerman, Sarah Doll, Steve Fridinger, Joe Boyer, Koua Yang, Jake Seltz, Hale Kringlie, Erik Kringlie. Back Row (L to R): Colby Zak, Adam Doll, Laura Meyer, Beth Fridinger, Steve Haug, Steve Tacl, Megan Graham, Katie Mulvey, Jeff Baill, Ellen Vander Linden, Brendan Fitzpatrick, Kai Kringlie, Susan Kringlie

Congratulations to the following winners who were honored at the USTA Northern Annual Awards Dinner on November 18 at Minnesota Valley Country Club in Bloomington, Minn.

2016 USTA Northern Award Winners

- ▶ **Albert Teeter Adult Sportsmanship Award** – Jake Seltz (St. Paul, Minn.)
- ▶ **Jerry Noyce Junior Sportsmanship Award** – Boys – Colby Zak (Hastings, Minn.); Girls – Katie Mulvey (Woodbury, Minn.)
- ▶ **Rocky Rockwell Grassroots Official Award** – Joe Boyer (Rochester, Minn.)
- ▶ **Jack Dow Adult Development Award** – Chad Larson (Mitchell, S.D.)
- ▶ **Ward Burton Junior Development Award** – Adam and Sarah Doll (Mankato, Minn.)
- ▶ **Junior Team Tennis Organizer of the Year** – Laura Meyer (InnerCity Tennis, Minneapolis, Minn.)
- ▶ **USTA No Cut All-Star Team** – Koua Yang (Harding High School, St. Paul, Minn.)
- ▶ **Family of the Year** – The Erik, Susan, Hale and Kai Kringlie Family (Valley City, N.D.)
- ▶ **Frank Voigt Pro of the Year** – Steve Tacl – (Rochester Athletic Club, Rochester, Minn.)

- ▶ **Wolfenson/Ratner Community Service Award** – Steve and Kathy Haug (Alexandria, Minn.)
- ▶ **Member Organization of the Year** – East Ridge Raptor Youth Tennis (Woodbury, Minn.)
- ▶ **ACE Award** – Kelley Okerman (Edina, Minn.)
- ▶ **President's Award** – Jeff Baill (Wayzata, Minn.)

Albert Teeter Adult Sportsmanship Award

Jake Seltz, of St. Paul, Minn., is the winner of the Albert Teeter Adult Sportsmanship Award given to the adult player who best displays fairness, is generous, is a gracious winner and good loser.

A long-time USTA League player and captain, Seltz is constantly looking to develop and grow the men's 4.5 leagues in the Section. He organizes practices, hitting session and social gatherings for players and has captained many teams to Sectionals. He also was a member of the USTA Northern Tri-Level team that competed at Nationals in 2013.

Jerry Noyce Junior Sportsmanship Award – Boys Winner

Colby Zak, of Hastings, Minn., is the Boys winner of the Jerry Noyce Junior Sportsmanship Award given to the junior player who not only displays the finest qualities of sportsmanship during tournament



A W A R D S

play, but who also demonstrates exemplary conduct away from the court.

Zak has played Junior Team Tennis (JTT) since 2013 and was a member of the Hastings Blue team which won the USTA Northern 14U Intermediate Section title in 2015 where he was named the Boys Sportsmanship Award winner. His team went on to finish 12th at the USTA JTT National Championships that year, and once again, he was the Boys Overall Sportsmanship winner.

He also plays junior tournaments and is an instructor for the Hastings Tennis Association. A freshman honors student at Hastings High School, Zak plays football, basketball and tennis. He has been playing varsity tennis since seventh grade and is an active member of Young Life and Student Council.

Jerry Noyce Junior Sportsmanship Award- Girls Winner

Katie Mulvey of Woodbury, Minn., is the Girls winner of the Jerry Noyce Junior Sportsmanship Award. A long-time junior tournament and Junior Team Tennis player, Mulvey won the USTA Northern JTT Girls 14U Section Sportsmanship award in 2014. A two-time Section champion, Mulvey recently finished third in singles at the Minnesota Class A State Tournament as a sophomore, after placing fourth in 2015. She also qualified for the state tournament as an eighth grader in doubles and was a member of the USTA Northern 16 and Under Zonals team in 2016.

A sophomore honors student at Trinity Valley at River Ridge High School, Mulvey has a 4.5 grade-point average and has won the National Latin Exam's Silver Medal twice. She is a member of Trinity's Wind Ensemble, receiving an excellent rating at the MSHSL State Contest with her flute solo and a Superior rating in the Minnesota Federation of Music Clubs competition. She is a Student Ambassador and a member of Trinity's Life Committee. She volunteers 30-40 hours each summer at Woodbury Senior Living – an assisted living center for the elderly.

Rocky Rockwell Grassroots Official Award

Joe Boyer of Rochester, Minn., is the winner of the Rocky Rockwell Grassroots Official Award given to an official who has done outstanding work at the grassroots level.

Boyer works at the junior, high school, college, adult and professional levels as a roving, line and chair official, as well as a referee. In 2016, he served as a chair official for the University of Minnesota, the Aquatennial Tournament and the Big Ten Men's Championships. He also was a line official for the US Open Northern Section Qualifier.

Jack Dow Adult Development Award

Chad Larson of Mitchell, S.D., is the recipient of the Jack Dow Adult Development Award which honors the individual whose efforts have had the greatest impact on promoting and improving recreational and adult competition for that year.

Larson and a team of dedicated individuals keep tennis thriving in the town of 14,000 people in central South Dakota. A member of the Mitchell Tennis Association, which guides the operation of leagues, tournaments, special events and communications, Larson has been instrumental in growing the men's leagues, as well as the Mitchell

Tennis Classic which has over 300 players participate. Larson also organizes a special event each May, introducing tennis to those in the community and runs a doubles fundraising tournament. He also has served as an assistant coach at Mitchell High School for 12 years.

Recently, Larson and the Mitchell Tennis Association have worked with the USTA and the City of Mitchell in the expansion of their tennis facilities from eight to 12 courts, raising in excess of \$300,000 for the project. To recognize his efforts, many local families pooled their resources together in naming one of the four new courts in honor of Larson.

Ward C. Burton Junior Development Award

Adam and Sarah Doll, of Mankato, Minn., are the recipients of the Ward C. Burton Junior Development Award given to the individual or organization who has promoted the growth of tennis for juniors and served the junior tennis community.

The Dolls have been instrumental in the development of hundreds of junior players in the Mankato area from entry-level to top varsity players. They work in conjunction with community education offering a Tennis in the Parks program in six local parks, a robust Junior Team Tennis program with nine teams in the 12U, 14U and 18U divisions, a Level 6 sanctioned tournament and a USTA Northern Competition Training Center. They host FREE one-day JTT Tournaments in June and July for over 25 teams. They also have over 30 seasons of coaching high school tennis between them as Adam is currently the boys and girls tennis coach at Mankato West High School.

Adam has served on the USTA Northern Junior Team Tennis committee since 2013 and has been the local JTT Coordinator in Mankato since 2013. He also has been a presenter at the Minnesota State High School Coaches Workshop and the USTA Northern Community Tennis Workshop. Both are members of the Greater Mankato Community Tennis Association and served as advisors to the GMCTA Board of Directors.

Junior Team Tennis Organizer of the Year

Laura Meyer, of Minneapolis, Minn., is the 2016 Junior Team Tennis Organizer of the Year. The award recognizes an individual for his or her efforts in expanding an existing Junior Team Tennis league or developing a new league within the Section.

Meyer oversees all junior program scheduling and registration at InnerCity Tennis in Minneapolis. ICT runs all seasons of Junior Team Tennis and serves as the home for the USTA Northern Junior Teams Fall and Spring seasons. Meyer has been the Tournament Director for the JTT Area Championships in both 2015 and 2016, hosting 14U and 18U Intermediate and 18U Advanced events. For these championships, she created new contact methods and general information guides for visiting team and parents. In addition, InnerCity Tennis served as the rain back-up for the 2016 Section Championships.

USTA No-Cut All-Star Team Award

Koua Yang of St. Paul, Minn., is the winner of the 2016 USTA No-Cut All-Star Team Award which recognizes 10 exceptional middle- and high-school coaches throughout the nation who implement a "no-cut" policy which welcomes all interested students to be a part of



their school's tennis team.

Yang began coaching right out of college in 1999. He has led the no-cut tennis program at Harding High School in St. Paul the last 11 years, developing the program from an annual number of 20 players to more than 90 and sustaining that number. The team has won nine boys tennis conference championships and five girls conference championships.

Frank Voigt Pro of the Year

Steve Tacl of Rochester, Minn., is the 2016 Frank Voigt Pro of the Year given to a tennis teaching professional who demonstrates leadership skills on and off the court.

Tacl coaches many of the Section's best players. He is the Ace/Academy Coordinator at the Rochester Athletic Club and is a member of many USTA committees including Junior Development and Player ID. He has served as the head coach of the USTA Northern 12 Zonals team and is a coach for the USTA Early Development and Team USA programs.

Family of the Year

The Kringlie Family (Erik, Susan, Hale and Kai) of Valley City, N.D., has been selected as the 2016 Family of the Year. The award is given to the family that has been outstanding in promoting tennis both on and off the court.

Susan is a member of the Valley City Tennis Association, North Dakota Tennis Association and USTA Northern Board of Directors. She assists in running local tournaments, including the Valley City Junior Open, and coordinates efforts of the North Dakota Tennis Hall of Fame. She and Erik also organize all Junior Team Tennis efforts in the area, while Erik serves as the head coach of the Valley City State Tennis on Campus program.

Both are also extremely active with the high school program in Valley City and work tirelessly in raising money to grow the game in Valley City. Erik also maintains all website and social media platforms and produces a newsletter for the Valley City Tennis Association. All members of the family participate in tournaments and Hale and Kai play Junior Team Tennis.

Wolfenson-Ratner Community Service Award

Steve and Kathy Haug of Alexandria, Minn., are the winners of the Wolfenson/Ratner Community Service Award given to the persons for their outstanding fieldwork in recreational tennis. It is also awarded for significant contributions in developing community-based tennis programs through community centers, schools, parks and Community Tennis Associations.

The Haugs have been actively involved in tennis in the Alexandria area for many years through the Alexandria Area Tennis Association (AATA). They have raised nearly \$70,000 for the new 12-court tennis complex at the high school, writing grants requests to local businesses, the city and the USTA. They have promoted tennis experiences for special needs youth and adults and have developed the "Gentle Tennis" program aimed at players 65 and over using the modified equipment on courts with blended lines at the new complex.

The President of the AATA, Steve also has served as an assistant

coach at the high school, helps administrate the Boys and Girls State High School Tournaments each year and is one of the lead instructors of the Golden K Summer Tennis Camp which is a free week-long camp for students in third-sixth grades. In 2015, under Steve's direction, the AATA took over the Lakes Area Recreation program, providing tennis opportunities for nearly 125 players from ages 5-15. He also runs a doubles and skills development camp for local players in Alexandria, a junior high school program and adult league night and helps organize the local junior tournament.

Member Organization of the Year

The **East Ridge Raptor Youth Tennis Association** in Woodbury, Minn., is the 2016 Member Organization of the Year in recognition of its outstanding service and setting the standards in which all organizations should strive to achieve.

Founded in 2010, the organization was formed to provide a high-quality, developmental youth program for children in grades 1-6 in order to strengthen the middle school and high school programs and develop this booming community's interest in tennis. Since 2010, ERAA has provided tennis instruction to over 800 families in South Washington County with the help of a large adult and high school student coach volunteer base.

ERAA offers fall and spring recreational programming that includes both lessons and a match-play component, in addition to partnering with Wooddale Tennis Center to run Junior Team Tennis programming to over 150 youth in the area from the 10U-18U Advanced levels. ERAA also works with the boys high school tennis team in offering a Level 7 USTA sanctioned junior tournament and week-long summer camp, and the girls high school tennis team in offering an additional week-long summer camp.

The program has fully adopted the USTA's Red, Orange, and Green Ball Pathway, using skill appropriate equipment. They have hosted Recreation Coach, and Red, Orange, Green Training Workshops. They had blended lines added to their courts and have had multiple instructors over the years attend USTA Community Tennis Workshops on both a section and national level.

ACE Award

Kelley Okerman of Edina, Minn., is the winner of the ACE Award given to the USTA Northern staff member for his or her outstanding work. The Director of Twin Cities Leagues, Okerman has been instrumental in the growth of leagues in the Twin Cities area, as well as creating programming opportunities for those adults new to the game as part of the Tennis in YOUR Park program. League participation in the Twin Cities grew 5% in 2016, and the Tennis in YOUR Park program grew 25% this year.

President's Award

Former USTA Northern President **Jeff Baill** of Wayzata, Minn., is the recipient of the President's Award given by the current President, **Kathy Lundberg**, to an individual who has been instrumental in supporting them during their tenure. A volunteer, Baill has been an advisor in many different capacities to Lundberg and the Section and dedicated many hours supporting USTA Northern in its mission over the past year.



CONGRATULATIONS 2016

Fall State Champions

Minnesota

Congratulations to **Mahtomedi**, who won its first-ever Minnesota Class AA Team championship, and **The Blake School**, which won its second straight title at the 2016 Minnesota State Girls High School Tournament at Baseline Tennis Center and Reed Sweatt Family Tennis Center, respectively.



Mahtomedi ended Edina's national record 19-year winning streak before defeating Eagan in the finals 5-2.

Mahtomedi defeated **Eagan** in the finals, 5-2, for its first-ever team championship. The Zephyrs made history in the semifinals when they upset **Edina** 4-3, ending the Hornets 19-year Class AA team championship winning streak, which was also the longest team winning streak of any sport in the nation.

Blake had a much easier time in the Class A finals, defeating **Rochester Lourdes** 7-0.

In the individual competition, Minnetonka's **Bella Lambert** won her first-ever Class AA singles title, defeating Edina's **Sophie Reddy** 6-0, 7-5. Lambert follows in the footsteps of her sister, **Aria**, who won the singles title in both 2008 and 2009.

In Class A, Blake's **Libby Rickeman** won her second straight singles championship with a 6-2, 6-4 win over teammate **Arlina Shen**. Rickeman and partner **Jane Fraley** also won the Class AA doubles title in 2014.

In doubles, the AA team of Prior Lake's **Savanna Crowell** and **Taylor Jackson** took home their first state championship with a 4-6, 6-4, 6-4 win over St. Cloud Tech's **Taylor Tarrolly** and sister **Katelyn**. In Class A, Blake's **Lainey Axell** and **Sophie Skallerud** won their first crown, defeating defending champions **Grace Zumwinkle** and **Lauren Kozikowski** of Breck 6-1, 6-3.

North Dakota

Grand Forks Red River is back on top after sweeping the team,

singles and doubles championships at the 2016 North Dakota Boys State Tennis Tournament at Choice Health & Fitness in Grand Forks. Red River, who had won 17 straight titles before losing to **Fargo South** last year, defeated **Bismarck Legacy** in the finals 3-2.

Jake Kuhlman won his first state singles title with a 6-2, 6-0 win over West Fargo's **Joe Beske**, while the doubles team of **Daniel Pierce** and **Kaden Johnson** beat Legacy's **Brian Swanberg** and **Michael Janes** 6-3, 7-6 (5) in the final. Swanberg was also named the Senior Player of the Year.

The All-State team included Kuhlman, Pierce and Johnson of Red River; **Logan Strand**, **Ben Swanson** of Fargo North; **Damien O'Donnell** of Fargo Shanley; **Davis Lawley** of Fargo South (who could not defend his 2015 state singles title after hurting his knee); Beske of West Fargo; **Cameron Cook**, **North Knewtson** of West Fargo Sheyenne; **Eric DeBoer** of Jamestown; **Casey Beck**, Janes and Swanberg of Bismarck Legacy and **Tyler Tweten**, **Connor Wieland** of Mandan.

Bismarck Legacy coach **Scott McPherson** was named the Coach of the Year.

South Dakota

Sioux Falls Lincoln won the team title at the 2016 South Dakota Girls State Tennis Tournament in Rapid City, S.D. Lincoln finished with 646 points, followed by **Rapid City Stevens** with 582 points and **Sioux Falls O'Gorman** with 513 points.

In the individual finals, sophomore **Danielle Sebata** of O'Gorman won her second straight Flight 1 singles title, defeating **Grace Goble** of Stevens 7-6 (1), 6-1. In South Dakota, six singles champions are crowned - one per flight - and three doubles winners.

Samantha Czarnecki of O'Gorman won her second Flight 2 crown and fifth state singles championship with a 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 win over **Meredith Brown** of Lincoln. **Ava Leonard** of Lincoln won the Flight 3 title with a 6-3, 7-6 (5) win over **Ingrid Anderson** of Stevens.

Emily Whitney of Lincoln won the Flight 4 position with a 4-6, 6-2, 6-3 win over **Halle Vanderwerff** of Stevens. **Johana Brower** of Lincoln won the Flight 5 title this year with a 6-1, 6-3 win over **Peyton Forney** of Stevens. In Flight 6, **Jaden Elliott** of Stevens beat **Brook Lovrien** of Lincoln 6-1, 6-2.

In doubles, Sebata and Czarnecki took the Flight 1 title again with a 6-2, 6-3 win over **Sidney Brower** and **Benson** of Lincoln. It was the fourth state championship in doubles for Czarnecki. Vanderwerff and Forney won the Flight 2 title 6-1, 2-6, 7-6 (2) over Leonard and Brower. In Flight 3, Whitney and Lovrien defeated Anderson and Elliott 3-6, 6-3, 6-4.

Kara Brusven of Pierre was the winner of the 2016 Spirit of Max Award, while **Pierre** won the Team Sportsmanship Award.

The All-Tournament Team was **Brooke Lovrien**, **Meredith Benson**, **Sydney Brower** of Sioux Falls Lincoln; **Grace Goble**, **Peyton Forney**, **Halie Vanderwerff** of Rapid City Stevens; **Emily Whitney** and **Ava Leonard** of Sioux Falls Lincoln and **Samantha Czarnecki** and **Danielle Sebata** of Sioux Falls O'Gorman.

Wisconsin

Eau Claire Regis earned finalist honors in Division 1, while **Eau Claire Memorial** advanced to the semifinals in Division 2 at the 2016 Wisconsin State High School Girls Tournament in Madison, Wis. Regis lost to **Edgewood** 7-0 in the finals, while Memorial fell to **Neenah**.

In individuals, Memorial's **Catherine Lindsay** finished in the Top 8 in singles and **Devon Bourget** and **Emily Pepperl** were fourth in doubles.

Fargo WINS

Team Spirit Award at Nationals

J U N I O R S



Congratulations to all of the teams who represented USTA Northern at the 2016 Junior Team Tennis National Championships in Cayce, S.C.

18s Intermediate



The 18 Intermediate team from Fargo finished ninth overall and was named the championship's Team Spirit Award winner. Coached by **Oliver Summers**, who was the 2016 USTA National Junior Team Tennis Organizer of the Year, Fargo was third in its round-robin flight sending them to the 9th-12th bracket. Mid-Atlantic was first with 168 total games, followed by Caribbean (158), Northern (135) and Texas (44).

Fargo beat Southern 57-38 in its first bracket-play match, and then overcame Middle States 52-40 in the 9th/10th-place contest. Members of the Fargo team included **Anna Steinwand, Chessa Jones, Damien O'Donnell, Joseph Beske, Lauryn Andre, Nathan Young, North Knewtson, Preeti Chemiti and Trevor Jacklitch**.

18s Advanced

Life Time Fitness - Fridley placed ninth overall in the 18s Advanced division. Northern was third in its round-robin flight with 106 total-games won. Mid-Atlantic was first with 163 games, Texas second (162), Northern and Hawaii Pacific (86).

In bracket play, Northern defeated New England, 54-34, and Missouri Valley, 59-19, for ninth place. Members of the team included **Alexandra Kopiecki, Charlie Adkins, Jake Trondson, Meagan Brown, Nikita Snezhko, Olivia Paradise and Samuel Hohenshell**. The team was coached by **John Trondson**. Mid-Atlantic went on the win the championship, defeating Southern in the finals.

14s Advanced

Northern was represented by **Life Time Fitness - Fridley** and **Life Time Fitness - Bloomington South** in the Advanced division. Bloomington South was ninth overall and Fridley 10th. Fridley finished third in its round-robin flight with 85 total-games won. Southern was first with 178, followed by Caribbean (143), Northern and Middle States (65). Members of the Fridley team included **Aili Hietala, Bjorn Swenson, Christo Alex, Courtney Kallas, Hank Trondson, Jonathan Nudler, Justin Bobo, Sarah Shahbaz, Sujit Chepuri, Tomas Jay and Zoe Adkins** and were coached by **Sion Wilkins**.

Bloomington South finished fourth in its flight but advanced to the 9th-12th place division because another team had the incorrect number of eligible players. Mid-Atlantic was first with 174 games, followed by Midwest (143), Missouri Valley (95) and Northern (48). Members of the BLS team were **Allen Gong, Gwendolyn Kelly, Isabelle Lynch, Jessica Ip, Nicolette Keller, Nisal Liyanage, Tharun Inturi** and coach **Spencer Jones**.

Fridley and Bloomington South then faced off in the 9th-10th match where BLS defeated Fridley 57-35. Mid-Atlantic won the championship.

14s Intermediate

In the Intermediate division, **Life Time Fitness - Bloomington South** finished eighth overall. In round-robin play, BLS was second with 138 games. Middle States was first with 168, while Southern California had 94 and Texas 72. In bracket play, BLS lost to eventual champion Eastern and Midwest. Members of the team included **Allison Agerland, Amisha Kshetrapal, Andrew Liu, Anirudh Vadrevu, Ashish Thotakura, Jack Ouyang, Kelly Wu and Sonya Ramesh**. They were coached by **Spencer Jones and Brady Shannon**.

Youth Progression Pathway Begins In 2017

The USTA Northern Youth Progression Pathway is a comprehensive and consistent Section-wide system for players from ages 7-10, which is easily accessible and provides play opportunities. This Pathway includes formal and informal competition and outlines a clear path from 10U (which begins with the first day of the month of the player's seventh birthday) into 12-18s competition.

Criteria For Advancing Through The Youth Progression System

Beginning January 1, 2017, a player may elect to move to the next ball color by accumulating a combination of 20 virtual stars and/or trophies by meeting the following criteria:

- ▶ **Age eligibility** – A player is not eligible to earn stars and/or trophies until the player reaches the first day of the month of the player's seventh birthday. A player remains eligible to earn stars and/or trophies until the player reaches the first day of the month of the player's 11th birthday. The age restriction for earning stars and/or trophies applies not only to tournaments, but also to Junior Team Tennis and Play Days.
- ▶ **Stars** – Earned for participation in Section-sanctioned progression tournaments, Junior Team Tennis (10U only) and designated progression Play Days.
 1. Stars may be earned by completing a Section-sanctioned progression tournament. Tournaments must be on the 2017 tournament schedule and must follow all criteria listed in rules and regulations (match format and tournament format) in order for players to receive credit.
 2. Stars may be earned by completing a 10U Junior Team Tennis season that includes at least two local league matches recorded in TennisLink. Default matches do not count. Players may receive stars for competing in up to two 10U JTT seasons per year.
 3. Stars may be earned for participating in youth progression Play Days. Orange and green ball players can earn a maximum of one star for participation in youth progression Play Days.
- ▶ **Trophies** – Earned for results in section-sanctioned progression tournaments
 1. Trophies may be earned, in addition to stars, by winning a section-sanctioned progression tournament. Tournaments must be on the 2017 tournament schedule and must follow all criteria listed in rules and regulations (match format and tournament format) in order for players to receive credit. Trophies may be earned, in addition to stars, by being a finalist in a Section-sanctioned progression tournament.

For questions or more information, visit northern.usta.com or contact **Pat Colbert** at Colbert@northern.usta.com or at (952) 358-3283.



The Role of Tennis Parents

in the Development of Their Child Athlete

by Dr. Gary Sailes

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Two years ago, the NBA Players' Association commissioned me to conduct research on the role of the parent in the development and transition of their elite basketball sons. The invited participants in their annual Top 100 Camp were those high school basketball players with the best chances of making it to the NBA one day. I read the corresponding research literature, as well as interviewed other sport psychologists, the athletes themselves, parents and coaches to gather my data. What follows are my recommendations based on my findings.



There are three primary individuals involved in the development of the elite tennis player. They are the coaches (experts), athlete and parents. I call this core group the Development Team.

The coaches are responsible for physical training, skill development, tactics, strategy, mental toughness and nutrition (sport science).

The athlete's role is to learn, develop, train and compete.

The parent's role is to be a parent period! That is to serve as a nurturer, mentor, financier, chauffeur, chef and sometimes assistant coach following the lead of the head coaches. The parent's role is critical to the success of the athlete because as an assistant coach (sort of), they must enforce the training recommendations imparted by their expert coaches.

Additionally, the parent should increase their tennis sport science knowledge base. For example, the parent may not be able to afford to retain a sports nutritionist, so it would be a good idea to read about tennis nutrition and implement a program on their own (general nutrition, pre- and post-game meals). Tennis sport science information can be found at the USTA Player Development website.

Specifically, the role of a parent is as follows:

1. Follow the lead of the primary coach(es) and encourage the child to follow the coach's instructions.
2. Provide the financial backing to support the athlete's development. One parent told me, "I can pay \$125,000 for college later or invest in my child's development now to earn a college scholarship later! My husband and I are the chauffeur, chef, banker, mentor, motivator, supporter and disciplinarian!"

In other words, they are simply parents. Problems arise when parents step outside their role and openly criticize the coaches, instruct their child in a methodology contrary to the coach's direction, focus too much on winning and not on development/performance, pushing too hard, not pushing hard enough, being too busy to be involved in the athlete's development, training and competition (presence), negative body language, negative criticism and more. When the athlete observes these things from their parents, it can lead to confusion, increased stress, loss of confidence, loss of focus, fear, low energy level, disinterest, under performance and the desire to quit tennis altogether. Trust me when I tell you, your athlete child notices everything and will internalize what they see. Parents need to be supportive, positive, progressive and learners themselves.

In summary, your biggest job as a parent is to just be a parent. Support, love encourage and respect your child. Pay for their training and competition, support the coaches, learn tennis sport science and accept the fact that you will not agree with everything that is said and done regarding your child's training and development. When that time comes, private conversations are the key to achieving understanding, respect and acceptance. Remember, the primary focus is the development and success of your athlete child.

So, just be a parent. It's the best job in the world and has its own rewards - the success of our children.



The Contrarian Tennis Player

By Danny Kantar

Games have always fascinated me in all of their formats as I savor the challenge of solving a puzzle and competing against a variety of opponents. Undoubtedly, my love of games has led me to my profession as a high-performance tennis coach where I continue to enjoy the daily challenges and ever-changing puzzle competitive tennis presents.

In today's tennis landscape, finding an edge over our opponents has become increasingly difficult as the tennis community has become sharper by improving its coaching education and training methodologies. Where then can we find our advantages over our opponents? One potential place we can look is in the development of a contrarian mindset. By helping our players differentiate their skills sets and overall strategic approaches in smart and unexpected ways, we can create potential opportunities for success and advancement over the more typical approaches of the masses.

Rick Barry's Free Throws

Essentially, being contrarian means to be different, but in an intelligent and effective way. With all games, popular opinion can play a role in how the game is approached by the majority of players. This can create incredible opportunities for the competitor if one can find a less popular approach that is equally, if not more, effective. Contrarian players choose the road less traveled, avoiding the masses, and instead, approaching the game from a completely opposite viewpoint.

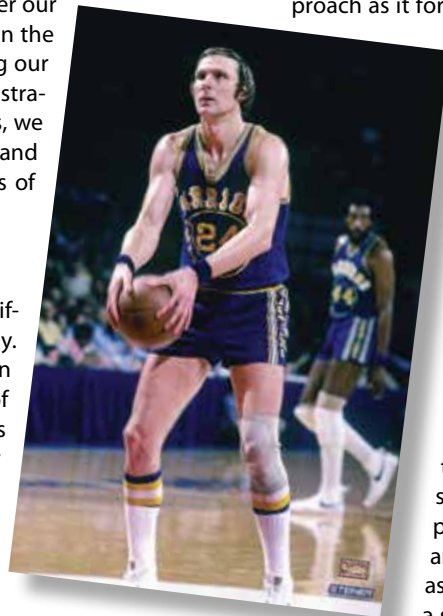
An incredible example of the contrarian mindset at work can be observed in **Rick Barry** who was one the greatest shooters in the history of the NBA. During his tremendous career, he was the only player ever to achieve the year-end scoring titles in the NCAA, ABA and NBA. Barry's most notorious accomplishment though was at one time holding the all-time record for career free throw percentage, shooting an astounding 90 percent. However, overshadowing this incredible achievement was his completely unorthodox method for executing these free throws, as he utilized a two-handed underhand toss to send the ball consistently through the hoop. Even though our modern NBA game is filled with many players who regularly struggle shooting free throws, no one attempts to approach this shot differently because shooting underhand is considered wrong. Instead of doing what was believed to be right or popular, Barry chose an unpopular, yet personally more effective approach. This is the core of what being contrarian is all about.

Contrarian Tennis Players

The contrarian tennis player is easily observable throughout the history of our sport. When the men's game was based upon a vertical serve and volley, chip-and-charge style of attack, **Andre Agassi**

chose to be contrarian and emphasize a horizontal baseline style of play, developing the return of serve and forehand into his primary weapons. With players like **Roger Federer** and **Rafael Nadal** dominating the competitive landscape with their tremendous forehands, it took **Novak Djokovic's** contrarian mindset to look to the backhand wing and transform this side into his preferred avenue of attack. In the 2016 US Open Final, **Stan Wawrinka** defeated Djokovic employing his unmatched one-handed backhand to great success. Learning the one-handed backhand itself is a perfect example of a contrarian approach as it forces your entire technical, tactical and athletic skill

set to become differentiated from the vast majority of your opponents who are typically taught to play the now more popularized two-handed backhand. Interestingly, learning the two-handed backhand was once a contrarian approach before its popularization by players such as **Chris Evert**, **Jimmy Connors**, **Bjorn Borg** and **Mats Wilander**.



Becoming Contrarian

In order to become a contrarian tennis player you have to develop a detailed understanding of how most competitive tennis players build their games. While tennis analytics is far behind the work produced in other major sports, any casual fan can see that most current successful competitive players prefer to structure their games around the baseline, usually favoring the forehand as a weapon, and complementing that attack with a strong service game on the men's side and strong return game on the women's side. Therefore, if the

majority of tennis players are building their games on a baseline-oriented, horizontal style then one strong contrarian approach could mean developing a more vertical style of gameplay.

Building your game around a first-strike attack on the serve and return, learning to hit the ball on the rise, taking space whenever possible and developing incredible skills at the net will certainly differentiate you as a player. Add in the fact that the majority of our Northern Section competitions are played on lightning fast indoor hard courts that favor a more aggressive style, and you've identified a vastly less popular, yet highly effective, stylistic approach that could potentially give you a significant advantage in competition.

In the challenging world of competitive tennis the edges over our opponents are slim, but one significant way to maintain an advantage is to develop contrarian tennis skills. Remember, being contrarian doesn't mean being foolish. Rather, it means you will be spending your time and energy developing skills and tactics that the majority of your opponents will overlook, because they aren't the most popular ways to play the game. By learning to take the road less travelled you will be creating fundamental adaptations in your primary skill set that can be potentially game changing come match time.



Over 120 community tennis leaders, representing 62 unique organizations attended the USTA Northern CommUNITY Tennis Workshop, November 18-19 in Bloomington and St. Paul, Minn., to learn, share and be inspired about ways to grow tennis in their local communities.

The theme of the workshop was “CommUNITY” and featured presentations from prominent speakers including former Australian Open Doubles Finalist and ATP Players Council President **Eric Butorac** of Rochester, Minn., USTA National Director of Junior Play and Competition **Craig Jones** and USTA General Manager of Community and Youth Tennis **Craig Morris**.



Friday’s events, at Minnesota Valley Country Club, started with breakfast and a Tennis Facilities Manager/Tennis Directors Forum, followed by USTA Northern Assistant Executive Director/Director of Junior Tennis **Pat Colbert**, who introduced the USTA’s new Junior Pathway taking

effect January 1, 2017. Jones went further into the Junior Pathway and explained in greater detail about Junior NTRP Ratings. Morris then provided an overview of the USTA’s new direction regarding community and youth tennis scheduled to launch in March of 2017 to providers and at the 2017 US Open for consumers. USTA Northern Director of Community Tennis **Christine Nickels** previewed the 2017 changes for certain Section programs and services. Later, there was a roundtable for park and recreation and community educators, in addition to table topics about junior tournaments, 2017 USTA Junior Team Tennis changes, grants and more.

Saturday was highlighted by Butorac, who won 14 ATP Doubles titles in his career and was recently hired by the USTA as the Assistant Tournament Director of the US Open. He started with a session on youth development and his personal journey to playing on the pro tour, which was followed by a question and answer session about life on the ATP Tour and his term as the Players Council President. Both sessions were streamed on Facebook Live and can be viewed at www.facebook.com/ustanorthern.



Prior to Butorac were a number of on-court sessions including Cardio Tennis by **Jaime Gaard Chapman** and **Megan Gaard**, Rules of Engagement for Large Junior Groups by **Brian McCoy** and Fast Track to Adult Success by **Brian Parkkonen**. That was followed by more table topics and a session on Understanding the Numerous Tennis Court Repair Options by **Fred Kolkman**.

In addition to the workshop were also the USTA Northern Annual Meeting and Section Awards Banquet on Friday evening, the USTA Northern Past President’s breakfast on Saturday and the Play It Forward Mixed



Australian Open Doubles Finalist and former ATP Players Council President Eric Butorac (left) shared his path to the pro ranks and answered many questions from the audience.

Doubles Swingle on Saturday night where participants brought new and gently used tennis equipment, balls and clothing which will be delivered to under resourced high school tennis programs within USTA Northern.

2016 CommUNITY Tennis Workshop Attendees

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Loren Aldrich | St. Louis Park Community Ed |
| Kevin Allan | Bismarck Mandan Tennis Association |
| Susan Allen | Shakopee Tennis Association |
| Carrie Anderson | City of Golden Valley |
| Eric Anderson | City of Owatonna— |
| | West Hills Tennis & Fitness Center |
| Jeff Anderson | Faribault High School |
| Richard Ariens | Greater Mankato Area Tennis Association |
| Jenny Arnfelt | Shakopee Tennis association |
| Marcia Bach | Crystal Recreation |
| Jeff Baill | USTA National Board of Directors |
| Joan Baker | USTA Board of Directors |
| Traci Balts | Eau Claire YMCA Tennis Center |
| Paul Barry | DeLaSalle High School |
| Mehdi Benyebka | USTA Northern Board of Directors |
| Scott Berggren | City of Crystal |
| Jeff Bessire | Prior Lake Athletics for Youth |
| Pam Boorsma | USTA Northern Board of Directors |
| Matt Boughton | Eau Claire YMCA Tennis Center |
| Scott Boyer | USTA Northern Board of Directors |
| Jan Butorac | Rochester Tennis Connection |
| Tim Butorac | Rochester Tennis Connection |
| Eric Butorac | USTA National |
| Maggie Butorac | |
| Becky Cantellano | St. Paul Urban Tennis |
| Jaime Chapman | Gaard Performance Academy |
| Paul Christen | Mandan High School |
| Robin Coverdale | Fred Wells Tennis and Education |
| Marcia Cushmore | Cook County Tennis Association |
| Jim Dahl | Milbank Area Community Tennis Association |
| Jessie Daw | Huether Family Match Pointe |
| Mark Ein | USTA National Board of Directors |
| Russell Ewen | Dakota Hills Middle School |



- Marina Morris
- Peter Morris
- John Muus
- John Niedfeldt-Thomas
- Kyle Oberg
- Dan O'Donnell
- Blake Olmscheid
- Brian Parkkonen
- Jon Pickett
- John Pratt
- George Punnoose
- Dipu Rahman
- Roshan Rajkumar
- Mike Ramirez
- Lars Ranger
- Felicia Raschiatore
- Gordon Reid
- Sadie Reiners
- Brian Reinowski
- Amos Ridenour
- Brian Rusche
- Nicolas Russillon
- Vida Saliendra
- Lisa Salo
- Sandy Schaar
- Alex Scheglowski
- Linda Seaver
- Hayley Shibley
- Clay Sollenberger
- Oliver Summers
- Ken Tang
- Aaron Thelen
- Jason Thiner
- Mary Thompson
- Christin Thurston
- Nadia Tirandazi
- Jacqueline Travis
- Esther Tsai
- Sherry Tschosik
- Tommy Valentini
- Mike Vidmar
- John Vogel
- Sloan Wallgren
- Eric Watne
- Nicole Weedman
- Sara Wennerstrand
- Kevin Whipple
- Julie Whitaker
- John Wilcox
- Fuyei Xaykaothao
- Zach Zitur
- Cook County Tennis Association
- DKO Custom Stringing
- Farmington Parks and Recreation PTR
- Eau Claire YMCA Tennis Center
- Baseline Tennis Center
- Jefferson High School
- USTA Northern Board of Directors
- USTA Northern Board of Directors
- City of Bloomington
- USTA Northern Board of Directors
- Williston Fitness Center
- Eden Prairie Life Time Athletic
- Hastings Tennis Association
- Bismarck Mandan Tennis Association
- Osseo Senior High School
- InnerCity Tennis
- Bismarck Mandan Tennis Association
- Brainerd Community Education
- Hastings Tennis Association
- Insperty
- Le Sueur Henderson High School
- Minneapolis Parks and Recreation
- Fred Wells Tennis & Education Center
- Courts Plus Community Fitness
- Minneapolis Washburn High School
- City of Arden Hills
- Courts Plus Community Fitness
- Sioux Falls Tennis Association
- USPTA Northern Division
- Minneapolis Parks and Recreation
- Minneapolis Parks and Recreation
- Fred Wells Tennis & Education Center
- Bismarck Mandan Tennis Association
- Gustavus Adolphus College
- USTA Northern Board of Directors
- Aberdeen Community Tennis Association
- Mendota Heights Park & Recreation Department
- Jamestown Tennis Association
- Eden Prairie Parks & Recreation
- Brainerd Community Education
- Baseline Tennis Center
- USTA Northern Board of Directors
- USTA Northern Board of Directors
- St. Paul Urban Tennis
- Courts Plus

- Jeanne Ewen
- Laura Fedock
- David Fishbaine
- Megan Gaard
- Justin Gaard
- Robb Graham
- Scott Gray
- Neal Hagberg
- Casey Hagert
- Liz Hamburg
- Whitney Hanley
- Jerry Hartmann
- Steve Haug
- Julie Henrichs
- Ryan Hoag
- Andrew Holm
- Christine Horton
- Tim Jachymowski
- Mike Johnson
- Craig Jones
- Aaron Kiesz
- Fred Kolkmann
- Hale Kringlie
- Kai Kringlie
- Erik Kringlie
- Susan Kringlie
- Greg Lappin
- Joey Larsen
- Emma Larson
- Shuman Lee
- Kathy Lundberg
- Amanda Lunsetter
- Brian McCoy
- Jenny Miller
- Jameson Miller
- Keith Mishler
- Rod Morasch
- Craig Morris
- Rosemount/District 196 Community Education
- St. Paul Urban Tennis
- USTA Northern Board of Directors
- St. Catherine University
- USTA Northern Board of Directors
- Madison Tennis Association
- USA Hockey
- Tennis and Life Camps at Gustavus
- Eden Prairie Parks & Recreation
- USTA Northern Board of Directors/Black Hills Tennis Association
- Black Hills Tennis Association
- Owatonna Tennis Association
- Alexandria Area Tennis Association
- Hastings Tennis Association
- Minneapolis Washburn High School
- USTA Northern Board of Directors
- USTA Northern Board of Directors
- Publicindoortennis.com
- Life Time Athletic St. Louis Park
- USTA National
- Aberdeen Community Tennis Association
- Fred Kolkmann Tennis & Sports Surfaces
- Valley City Tennis Association
- Valley City Tennis Association
- Valley City Tennis Association
- Lumahai LLC
- Prior Lake Athletics for Youth
- Rochester Athletic Club
- Public Indoor Tennis
- USTA Northern Board of Directors
- Wahpeton Public Schools
- Life Time Fitness - Fridley
- Le Sueur Henderson Youth Tennis
- Perham Tennis
- Insperty
- Bismarck Parks and Recreation
- USTA National



Craig Morris shared the USTA's new vision regarding community and youth tennis being introduced in 2017.



By Christine Nickels

More than 7,000 youth receive tennis and education programming annually in the Minneapolis and St. Paul area through the collective efforts of three USTA National Junior Tennis and Learning chapters: Fred Wells Tennis and Education Center, InnerCity Tennis and St. Paul Urban Tennis. The close proximity of these chapters creates a unique opportunity for collaboration and coordination around the shared goal of changing the lives of youth through tennis and education.

Using tennis as the hook that captures a child’s interest, opportunities arise to assist youth in developing critical life skills such as goal setting, communication, self-control, time management and teamwork. Academic concepts can also be introduced, taught and reinforced

“Convened by Christine Nickels of USTA Northern, leadership from FWTEC, SPUT, and ICT have spent the past year determining where our work aligns and how we differ allowing us to be more strategic in serving youth who live in under-resourced communities more effectively in our shared market. The USTA/Youthprise Urban Tennis and Education Fund gives us the financial support to make our collaborative plans a reality.”

– Kelley Nelson, Director of Education and Partnerships at Fred Wells Tennis and Education Center

through activities that are relevant to a sport they love. Nearly one in three tennis-playing middle schoolers in low socio-economic households indicate having an A average in school, compared to only one in six non-sport participants. Tennis-playing youth also outperform their peers in hours of homework completed per week, have lower suspension and expulsion rates and are less likely to engage in risky behaviors or be overweight or obese.

Recognizing the potential for us to better address the vast academic achievement gaps and health inequities in our community together, USTA Northern has engaged in a leveraging campaign with Youthprise, a local non-profit that champions learning beyond the classroom. This campaign launched an Urban Youth Tennis and Education Fund to accelerate innovation and spark new collaborative initiatives.

Through the generous support of initial funders, including cornerstone contributions from Youthprise and the USTA Foundation, we are able to be flexible and responsive to community needs, remove barriers to participation and make strides toward providing a seamless high-quality tennis and education pathway for under-resourced youth.

In 2016, dollars are being invested in the community in the following ways:

- ▶ **\$5,000** to support Fort First Fridays – A series of play events for urban high school tennis players on the first Friday of every month. The events consists of 60 minutes on-court followed by food, fellowship and a speaker.
- ▶ **\$10,000** to support a series of Level 8 tournaments on the third Saturday of every month to provide free match-play opportunities for under-resourced youth and introduce them to competition.
- ▶ **\$15,000** to support a shared bus contract to transport players on Saturdays to tennis and leadership opportunities in Minneapolis and St. Paul, including The Fort’s Serving Up Science program, InnerCity Tennis’ Super Saturday program and St. Paul Urban Tennis’ Warrior Leadership Academy.
- ▶ **\$25,000** to support a shared St. Paul Pathway Manager staff position to ensure youth in St. Paul understand how to navigate opportunities being offered by NJTL chapters. This position is also charged with identifying opportunities for enhanced efficiency and effectiveness through collaboration.

We are carrying this momentum into 2017 as we continue to maximize the many resources we have in our community including





talented and diverse staffs, caring volunteers, indoor and outdoor facilities, community partnerships and energetic and eager youth. Realizing the full potential will also take the continued financial support of individuals and corporations who share our belief in the power of tennis and education.

We encourage you to join our efforts through a donation of time, talent or treasure. To become involved, please contact **Christine Nickels** at nickels@northern.usta.com or (952) 358-3290.

To make a financial donation, visit: <http://bit.ly/1ZFW8kP> or send a check to Youthprise, 615 First Avenue NE, Suite 125, Minneapolis, MN 55413. Write: Urban Youth Tennis & Education Fund in the memo line. Youthprise is the fiscal sponsor for all contributions to the Urban Youth Tennis and Education Fund, working in close partnership with USTA Northern. **All contributions up to \$50,000 will be matched dollar for dollar by Youthprise and are tax-deductible.**



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Gregory and Dona Lappin
Kathleen Lundberg
Brian Mahin
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Andrew and Lisa Mushett
Tom and Christine Nickels
Gary and Maureen Petrucci
James Poehler
Marcus Pope
Carolyn Riley
Alex Scheglowski
Steven and Kathryn Schneider
Carol Thies
Kevin Werwie
Charles and Julie Whitaker
John Wilcox

“This joint campaign has made it possible for our three organizations to collaborate on some really beneficial programming for the kids we serve. With this critical support, our kids get more tennis, more coaching and mentoring, and more fun times together.”

— **John Wheaton,**
Executive Director of InnerCity Tennis

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CROSSCOURT

Fun, Yoga & Great Deals Highlight lululemon Member Event

Over 100 people flooded lululemon at the Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn., for an exclusive USTA Northern member event. Participants enjoyed yoga, free food and drink and discounts throughout the store.

USTA Northern members, family and friends enjoyed a private shopping experience from 10-11 a.m., prior to the store opening to the general public. Snacks and beverages were served and many of the store's most popular items were marked down 20%.

Prior to the shopping, lululemon professionals offered a tennis-specific yoga class from 9:30-10:00 a.m. with all proceeds benefitting the Urban Youth Tennis and Education Fund and being matched dollar-for-dollar by Youthprise.

Also, special congratulations to **Sydney Gottlieb** (Minnetonka, Minn.), who was the grand prize winner of a free top and bottom of her choosing courtesy of lululemon just for signing up in advance and attending the event.



Sydney Gottlieb



Adolf & Associates Earn Second At WTT Nationals

Congratulations to **Adolf & Associates** as they placed second at the World TeamTennis 5.0+ National Championships in Palm Springs, Calif. Team members, pictured with WTT founder **Billie Jean King**, were captain **Jeff Adolf** (Minneapolis, Minn.), **Kelsey Frechette** (Minneapolis, Minn.), **Niltooli Wilkins** (Burnsville, Minn.) and **Eric Linskens** (Minneapolis, Minn.).



Jeff Adolf, Kelsey Frechette, Billie Jean King, Niltooli Wilkins, Eric Linskens

Fred Budde and Randy Crowell Earn Bronze Ball at National Grasscourts

Congratulations to **Fred Budde** (Eden Prairie, Minn.) and **Randy Crowell** (Prior Lake, Minn.) on taking home the bronze ball at the USTA 60s National Grasscourts in Pontiac, Mich. Budde and Crowell, who were seeded fifth, won two matches before falling in the semifinals to eventual champions **Ross Persons** (Houston, Texas) and **Fred Robinson** (Charlotte, N.C.) 6-4, 6-1. In the third-place match, Budde and Crowell defeated top-seeded **Christopher Bennett** (Marlton, N.J.) and **Tom Smith** (Alpharetta, Ga.) in a walkover due to injury.



Randy Crowell and Fred Budde



Hayley Carter and Jessie Aney

Jessie Aney Wins ITA National Women's Doubles Title

Jessie Aney of Rochester, Minn., and the University of North Carolina, and partner **Hayley Carter** won five matches en route to the doubles titles at the 2016 Riviera/ITA Women's Tennis Championship, held at the Riviera Tennis Club in Pacific Palisades, Calif. Aney and Carter battled Pepperdine's fifth-seeded team of **Luisa Stefani** and **Apichaya Rungrudkriangkrai** through three intense sets, with the Tar Heel duo claiming the national title 6-1, 2-6, 1-0 (9).



Front Row: Christine Nickels, Lisa Mushett, Jeanne Elert, Dee Collette, Kathy Wijesinghe, Melissa Gross. Back Row: Carol Steiger, Mia Robillos, Michelle Collette, Stephanie Collette, Vanessa Sexton, Susannah Hoblitzell.

Dee Collette's 18 and Over 4.0 team took a night away from the courts to pack meals together at Feed My Starving Children in Eagan, Minn. They packed enough food to feed 87 children for an entire year. Awesome!



Magnus Norman

VISITS USTA Northern



Magnus Norman, coach of US Open Champion **Stan Wawrinka** and the 2016 ATP Coach of the Year, made his first-ever presentations in the United States when he did both an on- and off-court clinic in front of over 100 people October 23 at Life Time Fitness - Bloomington South courtesy of the United States Professional Tennis Association (USPTA) Northern Division.

Norman, from Sweden, was runner-up at the 2000 French Open and as high as #2 in the world. He won 12 singles titles, including the 2000 Tennis Masters Series tournament in Rome, Italy. After retiring, he started working with former doubles partner **Thomas Johansson** in the latter stages of Johansson's career, during which time he reached the Wimbledon semifinals and won two ATP titles. After this, Norman began coaching **Robin Söderling**, who under his wing reached consecutive French Open finals in 2009 and 2010, won the Paris Masters in 2010 and reached a career-high world No. 4 before suffering injuries and glandular fever that have hampered his career since.

More recently, Norman began a partnership with Wawrinka who has since won three Grand Slams, the 2014 Australian Open, 2015 French Open, and the 2016 US Open. Wawrinka has been ranked as high as #3 in the world. Norman has also teamed up with fellow former Swedish tennis players **Mikael Tillström** and **Nicklas Kulti** to run the Good to Great Tennis Academy, which has had among its students Wawrinka and rising Bulgarian star **Grigor Dimitrov**.

Both Norman's on-court and off-court presentations are available on the USTA Northern Facebook page. Visit facebook.com/ustanorthern.

Magnus Norman touched on developing world-class players and mental toughness, in addition to effective training and what defines a good coach. Some key takeaways from the workshop included:

- ▶ Norman works off of the CARE philosophy — Concentration, Attitude, Respect and Energy.
- ▶ "Hard skills" are more important than "soft skills." Hard skills are those that you do repetitively each day. They are the fundamentals that can be enhanced by continuous repetition. Soft skills are more reactive skills that are harder to teach.
- ▶ Assess and plan for each session. You should have daily and monthly goals, as well as big-picture goals. Think long-term development more than short-term results.
- ▶ If you are well prepared for each session, you will build trust and receive a lot of energy back from your player.
- ▶ Keep things as simple as possible!
- ▶ Start and build on the strengths and successes then move onto the weaknesses.
- ▶ Give players space to try new things on their own.
- ▶ Be even more present when your athlete is struggling.
- ▶ Training is important, but the remaining 20 hours in a day are even more important.
- ▶ Arrive early for a practice and be prepared.
- ▶ The first shot of a practice is the most important shot as it tells you how the rest of the session will go.
- ▶ Use targets as much as possible in your practices.
- ▶ See beyond tennis as having a good life balance is essential in developing a player.

Mentally Strong Dos and Don'ts For A Successful Player

- ▶ DO control thoughts and emotions
- ▶ DON'T feel sorry for yourself
- ▶ Do admit fear
- ▶ DON'T waste time on things you cannot control
- ▶ DO visualize
- ▶ DON'T give up

- ▶ Learn when and how to communicate with your player. Each player is different and your job is to recognize what works for each individual.
- ▶ NEVER step away from your principles.
- ▶ Honor those who put in the work with the player before you.
- ▶ Put on your own mask before helping others — you must take care of yourself first to be the best coach you can be.
- ▶ Coaches are generalists. You need to learn about all aspects of the game — skills, nutrition, health, strength, endurance, psychology, etc., and figure out how to put them together. Also, do not be afraid to bring in someone who might know more about a topic than you do.





“The Brain. Please allow me to explain. There’s no organ that can compare to it. I swear to it. It’s plain. It’s the brain.”

– Dr. Frankenstein in *Young Frankenstein*.

It has been said the most difficult opponent in sports is between your two ears. However, with new data never before available, it is time to change our way of thinking during matches and even our practice sessions according to professional coach **Craig O’Shannessy**, creator of the www.BrainGameTennis.com and a lead analyst for the ATP Tour. Previously, much of sport has been educated guesswork as players and coaches were not exactly sure how matches or games were won. No more as O’Shannessy, who was the guest speaker at United States Professional Tennis Association (USPTA) Northern Division’s National Education Day at Life Time Fitness - Fridley in November, has found while researching results on all levels from juniors to the Grand Slams.

“Consistency is overrated,” O’Shannessy said.

Absurd? Of course, as everyone knows you want to be consistent and patient. Or is it? Did you know the majority of points, and ultimately tennis matches, are won or lost in the first four shots? On the pro tour, 70 percent of all men’s points and 66 percent of all women’s points are won in the first four shots. In college, the numbers are 62 percent for men and 61 percent for women. Juniors are 61 percent in both Boys and Girls 18s. Even in 12s, over 55 percent of boys and 57 percent of girls points are won in four shots or less. What we think is the beginning, is really already the end.

The serve, return, the serve plus one and the return plus one make up the first four shots of any rally, yet we find these shots are the least practiced by people of all ages. Players are also least proficient with these shots and they are the least understood, which really does not make any sense as they are the shots we are hitting the most. Yet, players and coaches love to practice 20-plus stroke rallies, which rarely occur in a match, and skip practicing serves and returns. I cringe when I see junior players practice more “tweeners” than serves and returns.

How does O’Shannessy’s research correlate to the average player? No matter what level you play, his research shows the first two shots are the most important of the rally. Therefore we should all be practicing more serves and returns. We should also try to get the first shot of the rally to our opponent’s backhand as it is usually weaker than the forehand. We should work on the depth of our shot, which is much more important than pace. Finally, we need to have a purpose for every shot we hit. As O’Shannessy said, “It is easier to make your opponent play bad, than it is to play consistently excellent yourself.”

While consistency is important, his research shows it is more important to be good early in the point. The average point is only 3.6 shots so one should have a plan to get ahead early. On the men’s tour, if the server wins the first point, he wins the game 93 percent of the time. That is big!

A person does not have to have a PhD in math or biomechanics or have slept in a Holiday Inn Express last night in order to play smart, but they should be aware of what makes their opponent uncomfortable (no...wearing **Stan Wawrinka’s** latest fashion statement is not one of them). Look at consistency, direction, depth, height, spin, power, court position and time.

In my mind, there are three areas which are keys to winning consistently. They are depth, court position and time. Tennis is a game of errors, even at the highest level of play. The easiest way to force an error is to keep the ball deep. As a general rule with court position, whoever plays closest to the baseline most often wins the match. If you watch this year’s US Open men’s final, look at how the court position reversed from the start to the finish. At the beginning, Wawrinka was farther behind the baseline and lost the first set. As the match progressed, he moved closer to the baseline, while **Novak Djokovic** kept moving farther and farther behind it.



Time is also a big factor. People do not like to be rushed. Using the serve and volley or approach and volley are far and away the tactics with the highest winning percentage. Others will argue that players don’t come in as much as they stay back, so the numbers must be skewed. That may be, but even if the percentages dropped by 10 percent, they would still be effective enough to be #1 in the world as the margins between winning and losing are that small at any level.

Does this mean everyone should convert to serve and volley and chip and charge players? Absolutely not. However, one should not forget about these tactics. Did you know the average tour player loses more than half of their groundstroke points (shocking, but true)? Good groundstrokes are essential, but often times are given too much relevance on the practice court.

So what can I do to make points shorter and ultimately improve my game?

1. Practice a three- or four-shot rally starting with the serve. Stop and do it again. This is the practice former Gustavus All-American **Dick Schneider** has used for years.
2. Focus on keeping the ball deep when you rally (the blue 60-foot lines are great targets). Depth has always been effective, but seems to have fallen out of style with topspin and power getting more attention.
3. Practice your return of serve. Local standout **Mickey Maule** has a great return of serve - compact, accurate with spin and power. This shot helped him achieve a #1 world ranking in the 40s with partner **Rick Leach** in 2012.
4. Practice transition shots, especially approaches. Add some serve and volley to your game. It has helped **Roger Federer** stay competitive with the top players as he is getting older and is key to Canada’s **Milos Raonic** earning a spot in the Wimbledon finals this year.
5. Finally, play sets with serves and returns.

Everything in tennis, as in life, is situational. There are times to play groundstroke games, grind or even work on “tweeners,” but seeing now that tennis is a front-loaded sport, wouldn’t it make more sense to practice what occurs most often – serves, returns, approaches and volleys? That is if winning is your objective.



USTA Northern Controller

James Poehler

Q. What is your role with USTA Northern and how long have you been there?

A. I am the Controller and will have been here 14 years in May of 2017.

Q. Where did you go to college, major, play college/high school tennis?

A. I attended Wisconsin-Eau Claire and the University of Minnesota. I was an Accounting major with a German minor.

Q. Describe your job responsibilities?

A. Accounting, compliance, risk management, budget, human resources and IT coordination

Q. What is the favorite part of your job?

A. I like all the variety of wearing all the different hats.

Q. What are some challenges of your job?

A. There are lots of vendors, lots of systems and lots of passwords. I really like to continually improve how we track and forecast organization activity.

Q. What are two of your top memories while working with USTA Northern?

A. One has to be interviewing for the job and starting the next day. The other was going through the painful conversion of the accounting system.

Q. What is your tennis background? How did you find yourself in the game?

A. I played at a local park through Junior High.

Q. Outside of tennis, what are some of your hobbies and interests?

A. I am active in the Catholic church and take an interest in history, current events and health issues. I am also the treasurer for a Minnesota state senator.

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Q. What three words describe you best?

A. Random, abstract, style

Q. Favorite food?

A. Artichokes

Q. Favorite TV show?

A. Gotham. My friends think I look like Oswald Cobblepot.

Q. Favorite Movie?

A. Groundhog Day

Q. Favorite Musical Genre or Group?

A. Good country music is like bad whiskey, it burns goin' down.

Q. Favorite Place To Visit?

A. Duluth, Minn. The hills offer a great workout.

Q. Family? Married? Kids? Animals?

A. Just moved to Shoreview with a posse and a Persian cat.

Q. If you did not work at USTA Northern, what would be your ultimate job?

A. Infowars Reporter or Naturopathic Physician

Q. When you were growing up, what did you want to be?

A. A forest ranger or guide

Q. Who are your heroes or people you admire the most and why?

A. St. Francis of Assisi — I love how he set forth on foot the moment he had a new inspiration.

Q. If you could take 24 hours

and do anything you like, what would it be?

A. I would go skiing in Aspen, Colo.

Q. In your mind, why should people play tennis?

A. Tennis will make you grow taller. Ha!

Q. Anything else you would like to add?

A. I am a historical revisionist as I love to uncover historical untruths – the more controversial the better.





Congratulations to the men's 7.0 55 and Over team, captained by **Eric Narvaez** and **Peter Haan** out of St. Paul Academy High School, who won the 2016 USTA League National Championship in Surprise, Ariz. Team members included Narvaez, Hahn, **Randy Sanders**, **George Kimball**, **Brad Struve**, **William Boyes**, **Van Dickerson**, **Robert Lang**, **Dave Hofeldt**, **Francois Nguyen**, **Ron Ingalls**, **Michael Schneider**, **Gary Simpson** and **Bill Jamieson**.

Northern won its round-robin flight 3-0, defeating Mid-Atlantic, Florida

and Midwest all by the same 2-1 scores. In the semifinals, Northern took out New England 3-0 and won the championships by defeating Southern California 2-1 as Northern won at the #1 and #3 doubles positions.

This marks the second National Championship in two years for Narvaez and Haan as they also captained the 6.0 55 and Over men's team which took home the title in 2015.

Narvaez shared his thoughts on the weekend and winning this "surprise" championship.

BY ERIC NARVAEZ

Peter Haan and I decided to captain together at the 55 and Over 7.0 level again as we had since 2013.

We had a team for each of the 2016 seasons, and won all three leagues. The summer team proved to be the strongest and advanced through the Section Championships in August to the Nationals in Surprise, Ariz.

The team was comprised of 13 players: three 4.0 players, eight 3.5s and two 3.0s. All had computerized ratings. Randy Sanders and Bill Boyes were both due for knee replacement surgery, but Bill scheduled his for right after Nationals (having it the next week). Randy chose to bypass the tournament and will have his surgery soon.

We all felt our team was strong, but did not expect to reach the final, let alone win it. Our initial goal was to reach the semifinals. However, once that was achieved, we believed we could beat New England in the semis, which we did 3-0.

In the final, we expected to play Southern Cal, which had won the 55 and Over 6.0 and 8.0 National Championships the weekend before, sweeping the finals with identical 3-0 scores. The week before, our 55 and Over 6.0 team that I captained played Southern California in the semis at Nationals. We lost one match 0 and 0 and another 0 and 5, before winning at #3 3 and 5. Come to find out, we were the only team to take a team point off the Southern Cal team all season, which made us pretty happy.

Now at the 7.0 level, Southern Cal had four starters from their 8.0

championship team in the lineup. Needless to say, Southern Cal was heavily favored by virtue of their roster and its previous success. All we could do was put our players in the best position to have a chance.

Honesty, I expected to lose and finish second, but then Gary Simpson and Ron Ingalls pulled out the first set at #1 doubles. At #2, we were giving our best, but were going down to two 3.5s that had won together in straight sets at the 8.0 finals.

The battle at #3 was the deciding match and it was a good one. Captains and players from other teams began to crowd around as the significance of that team point became evident. One fan yelled, "Now we're having fun!"

The match had its controversies with our players calling for the umpire more than once. Both teams had 4.0/3.0 combinations fighting it out. After the first set fell in our favor, I sensed we could win this thing.

The score ended up 6-4, 6-4, in an upset with our 3.0 player, Van Dickerson, having withstood the constant pressure from the Southern Cal 4.0 player (also an 8.0 starter and champion) who was not used to losing. Looking back, Van was our MVP of the weekend. While Gary and Ron won all their matches together, Van had never been to a national tournament, practiced hard all summer, played five matches in a row, and won them all.

Amazing!

Congrats Other League National Top 4 Finishers

In addition to the 7.0 55 and Over Men, Northern has had three other teams finished in the Top 4 including the 55 and Over 6.0 Men's team captained by **Eric Narvaez** (third), the 4.5 18 and Over Women captained by **Mary Beth McDonald** (fourth) and the 4.5 40 and Over Men captained by **Ken Cychosz** (fourth).



18 & Over Adult



3.0 Men – Captains: Jeff Nelson and Robert Stuart
(Life Time Fitness-Bloomington South)



3.5 Men – Captains: Mike Torres and Morgan White
(Baseline Tennis Center)



4.0 Men – Captain: Tim Magnuson
(Public Indoor Tennis)



4.5 Men – Captain: Bruce Gullikson
(Life Time Fitness-Bloomington South)



5.0+ Men – Captain: Adam Altepeter
(Life Time Fitness-Fridley)



2.5 Women – Captain: Colleen Timimi
(Rochester Athletic Club)



3.0 Women – Captain: Kristen Kolpek
(Rochester Athletic Club)



3.5 Women – Captains: Tara Frimat and Mary Shannahan
(Edina Country Club)



4.0 Women – Captain: Diane Drake
(InnerCity Tennis)



4.5 Women – Captain: Mary Beth McDonald
(Life Time Fitness-Bloomington South)



5.0+ Women - Captain: Kris Paul
(Life Time Athletic-St. Louis Park)



6.0 Mixed – Captain: Carl Bigby
(Life Time Fitness-Bloomington South)



LEAGUE SECTION CHAMPIONS



7.0 Mixed – Captain: Diane Madden
(Life Time Fitness-Fridley)



8.0 Mixed – Captains: Dennis Morgan and Patti Horita
(Life Time Fitness-Fridley)



9.0 Mixed – Captain: Sara Humann
(Life Time Athletic-St. Louis Park)

40 & Over Adult



3.0 Men – Captain: Carl Bigby
(Fred Wells Tennis Education Center)



3.5 Men – Captains: Brad Struve and Eric Narvaez
(St. Paul Academy & Summit School)



4.0 Men – Captain: David Goodman
(Baseline Tennis Center)



4.5+ Men – Captain: Ken Cychosz
(Eden Prairie Life Time Athletic)



3.0 Women – Captains: Jennifer Beaudion and Laura Robbins
(Eden Prairie Life Time Athletic)



3.5 Women – Captains: Carmen Callies and Kathleen Geherin
(Eden Prairie Life Time Athletic)



4.0 Women – Captains: Sarah Foley and Julie Ouyang
(Life Time Fitness-Oakdale Village)



4.5+ Women – Captains: Helen Gunther and Ann Eliason
(Williston Fitness Center)



6.0 Mixed – Captain: Carl Bigby
(Life Time Fitness-Bloomington South)

LEAGUE SECTION CHAMPIONS



7.0 Mixed – Captains: Chris Homsey and Trent Waite
(Life Time Athletic-St. Louis Park)



8.0 Mixed – Captains: Dana Hansen and Morgan White
(Life Time Fitness-Bloomington South)



9.0 Mixed – Captain: Greg Garritty
(Life Time Athletic-St. Louis Park)

55 & Over Adult



6.0 Men – Captain: Eric Narvaez
(Fred Wells Tennis Education Center)



7.0 Men – Captains: Eric Narvaez and Peter Haan
(St. Paul Academy & Summit School)



8.0 Men – Captains: Ahto Niemiöja and Don Smith
(Fred Wells Tennis Education Center)



9.0 Men – Captain: Steve Radermacher
(Town and Country Club)



6.0 Women – Captain: Kelly Stordahl
(Life Time Fitness-Bloomington South)



7.0 Women – Captain: Carol Thies
(Life Time Fitness-Bloomington South)



8.0 Women – Captains: Sheryl Warfield and Kay Conway
(Rochester Athletic Club)

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